

Friday, August 12, 2005

**NTSB Team to Sudan – Why would we do that?**

**Earlier this week Lorenda Ward led a U.S. accredited representative team including Ron Price (Operations/Engineering) to Estonia to participate in the investigation of a Sikorski S-76 commuter helicopter crash in the Gulf of Finland that killed all 14 persons on board. Last week we ALL read about the A340 crash in Toronto, which was equipped with U.S. manufactured GEAE/CFM engines. Therefore, a U.S. accredited representative team, led by Robert Benzon along with Carol Horgan (Powerplants), Nora Marshall and Cindy Keegan (Survival Factors), joined with the Transportation Safety Board of Canada in the investigation. Well done to all.**

The recent tragic helicopter crash in Sudan demonstrates, once again, the tremendous confidence that the highest levels of government place on the dedicated staff of the NTSB. The crash on July 30th in the rugged mountains near New Site, Sudan, fatally injured Sudanese Vice President John Garang and all 12 others as they were enroute from Uganda to Sudan aboard the Ugandan presidential aircraft, a Russian manufactured Mi 172 Helicopter.



*Paul Sledzik and Ken Suydam of the NTSB Transportation Disaster Assistance Office, along with two local officials, at the New Site, Sudan, airstrip awaiting transportation to Kenya.*

We all recognize the International Civil Aviation Organization Standards in ICAO Annex 13 and the NTSB obligation to participate in foreign accidents involving U.S. manufactured or operated aircraft or American citizen victims. But once again, the NTSB was called upon to go well beyond the norms of Annex 13 and respond to the U.S. Department of State in support of sensitive and critical challenges surrounding international diplomacy.

Being a team member of the NTSB brings with it a unique opportunity in government service, and participating in activities that go well beyond the traditional duties of accident investigation has been an important part of our tradition and responsibility. Whether responding to a request from the State Department, the White House, or even a foreign government, technical assistance from the NTSB should be viewed with a great sense of pride – as these requests demonstrate we provide the best and most credible investigation competence in the world.

Our current mission to Sudan is part of a continuing success story of NTSB support that is well above and beyond the call of normal service. Throughout the years, we have responded to similar high visibility, international accidents including a BAC 111 in Africa, an Emb 120 in Latin America, an Mi-8 in the Caribbean, the Concorde in Europe, and an A320 in the Middle East. Response to these requests calls for NTSB management to evaluate all the rigors of foreign travel. Before undertaking these tough missions, we gather advice, support and appropriate resources to provide for the health, security and well being of our personnel.

As your Acting Chairman, and speaking for my fellow Board Members, I salute all of you, the dedicated staff that continues to step forward to make the NTSB the premier organization in the field of accident investigation. The expertise and commitment of the NTSB staff is without parallel. It is clearly recognized and appreciated, not only in the USA, but around the world. Your record of service and results speaks for itself.

Special thanks to Dennis Jones, Alex Lemishko, Paul Sledzik and Ken Suydam who are currently serving on this important mission.

**Chairman Designate Supports Diversity Outreach**

Chairman Designate Ellen Engleman Conners met August 3<sup>rd</sup> with Mr. Ray Mellado, Chair and CEO of Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation (HENAAC), to discuss efforts to reach out to the next generation of engineering students and increase participation in technology based study and career paths. "Organizations that help students make that important link between today's studies and tomorrow's opportunities are critical to the future success of our country as a world leader in technology. Supporting a diverse student base will be critical to creating advances in transportation safety in the future," Engleman Conners noted.

*Ms. Engleman Conners and Mr. Mellado are pictured with Miss Judy Santa Cruz, an HENAAC scholarship recipient and summer intern with the NTSB's Office of Research and Engineering in Washington, DC.*

## Jack Spencer Joins NTSB



The NTSB welcomes Dr. John Spencer as Director of the Office of Marine Safety. Dr. Spencer has spent his 35-year professional career on maritime safety issues. He worked for the United States Coast Guard for 21 years in the Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection Program. He then spent 14 years with the American Bureau of Shipping, most recently as Vice President of Technology in Houston, Texas.

Dr. Spencer received his bachelor's degree in naval architecture and marine engineering from the Webb Institute of Naval Architecture in Glen Cove, New York, and a master's in the same discipline at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He earned his doctorate in structural engineering at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He also holds a master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College.

## NTSB Welcomes Air Safety Investigators to Support Regional Aviation Operations



**Bill Gamble** recently accepted a position as Aviation Accident Investigator in the South Central Regional Office (SCRA), Arlington, Texas. Bill was initially hired as an aircraft accident investigator in 1992, and served as the investigator-in-charge of 44 aircraft accidents. Due to his outstanding skills with computers, he won the Managing Director's Award during his first year of employment, and later transferred to work as a computer analyst in RE-21. Prior to his Safety Board experience, Bill accrued several thousand flight hours as an Army helicopter pilot; he served with distinction as an accident investigator for the Army for nearly 15 years and co-wrote the Army's "Accident Investigator's Handbook" in 1990. While in the Army, Bill also served as a unit and brigade safety officer, and was the recipient of the Army's "Warrant Officer of the Year" award in 1986. Bill's skills in accident investigation and fluency in Spanish are a welcome addition to the SCRA office.



**Jennifer Kaiser** was recently converted from a cooperative education student trainee to a full Air Safety Investigator in the Central Mountain Regional Office (CMRA) in Denver, Colorado. Jennifer holds a commercial certificate with single and multiengine land privileges in addition to an instrument rating; she also holds a certified flight instructors certificate and an instrument flight instructors certificate. Jennifer is a graduate of Casper College with two associate degrees in aviation science and foreign language (German). She is also a graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a B.S. in professional aeronautics and M.S. in aviation science with human factors and aviation safety specializations. In addition to experience as a flight instructor, Jennifer has worked as a professional pilot in pipeline patrol and photo reconnaissance. She has also delivered new aircraft from the factory, and has experience with freight and passenger operations with a fixed based operation in Casper, Wyoming. She has flown over 20 different types of aircraft in the past 10 years and has logged approximately 1,900 flight hours.



**Zoë Keliher** was recently converted from a cooperative education student trainee to a full Air Safety Investigator in the Southwest Regional Office (SWRA), Gardena, California. She graduated with distinction and a 4.0 GPA at the end of June from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University with a master's degree in aviation business administration. In addition, Zoë holds a bachelor's degree in aerospace studies, with minors in meteorology and aeronautical science. With over 500 hours of flight experience, she holds a commercial pilot certificate with airplane ratings for single engine land, multiengine land, and instrument airplanes. She has also enrolled in a certified flight instructor certification program, and is pursuing an airframe and powerplant certificate. Zoë previously held responsible positions in technical services, purchasing, and sales at Aviall, a global aircraft parts distributor.

## NTSB Employee Attains FAA Flight Instructor Certification



Congratulations to Dr. Paul Schuda of MD-4. Paul recently took three weeks of annual leave to fly to Oklahoma and attain his FAA Certified Flight Instructor and Certified Instrument Instructor ratings. He is a First Lieutenant (soon to be a Captain) in the National Capitol Wing of the U.S. Air Force Auxiliary, the Civil Air Patrol, where he volunteers many hours of his time to Search and Rescue, Homeland Security and other critical missions.

## Update on Most Wanted Safety Recommendations

The Board continued its long-standing effort to educate State legislators in key southern States by addressing the Southern Legislative Conference Transportation and Cultural Affairs Committee. Follow-up actions include working with legislators in several States to promote the Board's recommendations.

Advocacy staff met with representatives of SafeKids International to discuss areas of mutual interest and possible joint efforts in the State legislatures in 2006 on child passenger safety.